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Healthy Aging in Massachusetts: Reporting Indicators, Identifying Resources & Activating Allies

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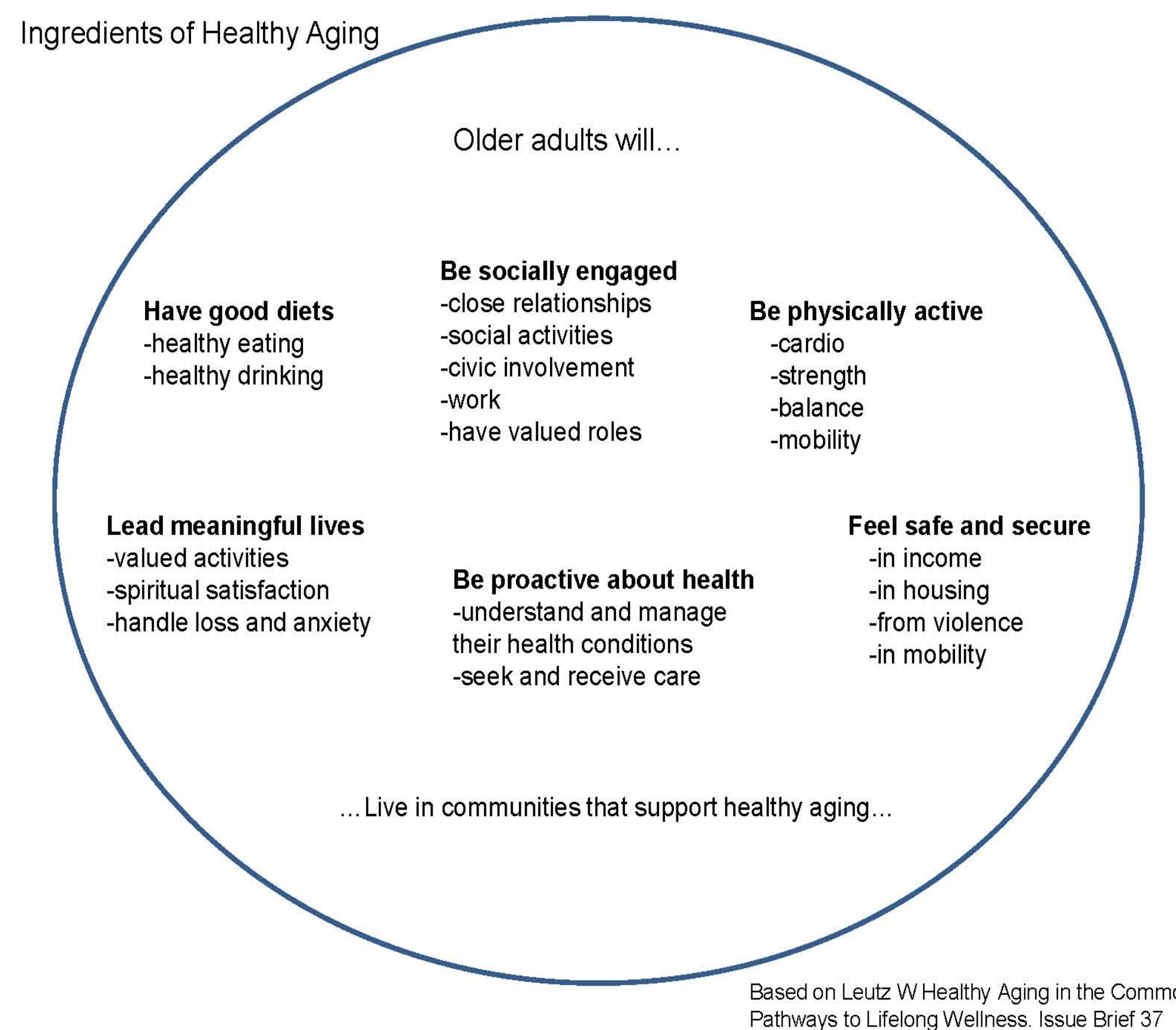
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Healthy Aging in Massachusetts: Reporting Indicators, Identifying Resources & Activating Allies

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Summary/Abstract



Goals and Objectives

- (1) describe a conceptual model of healthy aging;
- (2) describe a statewide initiative to report indicators of healthy aging in Massachusetts; and
- (3) share results of an environmental scan of healthy aging programs and services in MA.

Approaches and Methods

In Massachusetts, a Healthy Aging Collaborative comprised of a diverse group of stakeholders has been formed for multiple purposes: information sharing around healthy aging, idea generation, partnership building and activity mapping.

Approaches and Methods

Researchers at the University of Massachusetts Boston Gerontology Institute were supported by The Tufts Health Plan Foundation to create a **Scorecard of Healthy Aging**, to scan existing resources and to support advocacy to promote healthy aging.



The **Scorecard** reports indicators that represent the multidimensional domains of healthy aging: **physical health** (self rated health, recent fall w injury, tooth loss, disability), **mental health** (depression, life satisfaction, poor mental health days), **nutrition and diet** (obesity, access to healthy foods, daily fruits/vegetables, smoking, alcohol use), **safety and security** (violent crime rate, elder abuse rates), **proactivity in health behaviors** (physical activity, cancer screening, flu-pneumonia-shingles vaccines, dental exams, cholesterol screening), **social engagement** and **having meaningful roles**, and **health care utilization and access variables**.

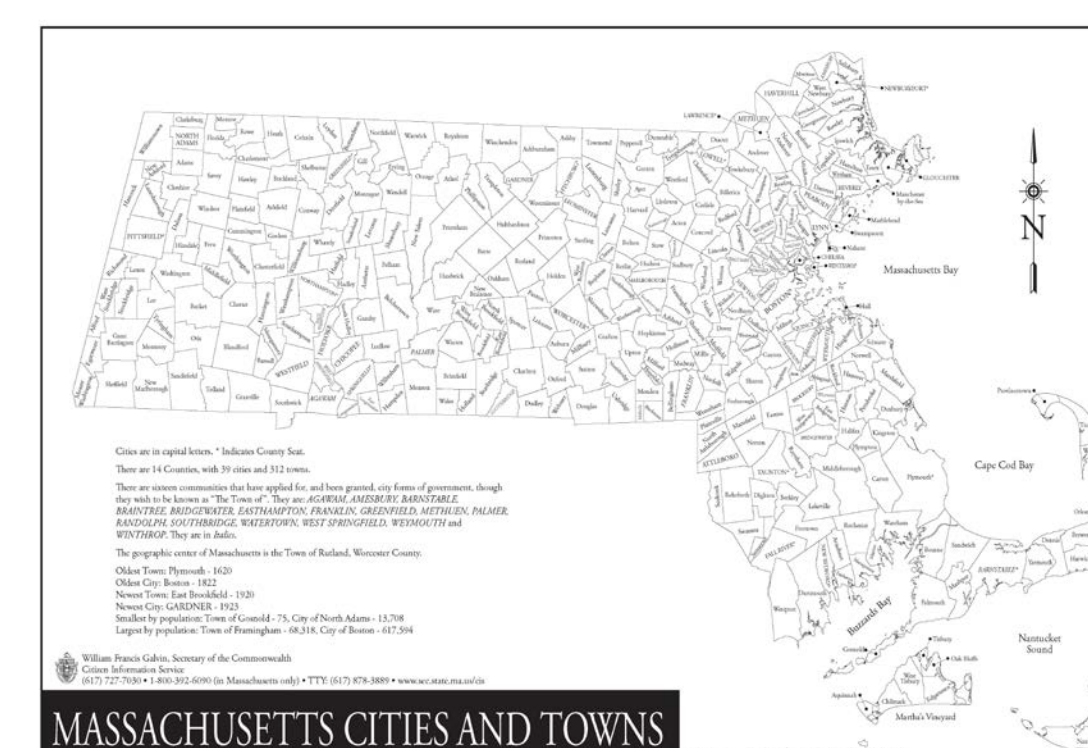
Results/Impact

Sociodemographic variables were also analyzed (age, gender, race, education, marital status, % Medicaid dually-eligible).

Statistical approach

First, we analyzed data from multiple existing sources (e.g., CMS 2009-2011 Master Beneficiary Summary files, 2006-2011 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System for Massachusetts, 2010 Area Resource File, County Health Rankings and Roadmap, Food Environment Atlas County Data 2005-2007, Dartmouth Atlas of Health Care Physician Supply (Primary Care Service Areas), and MA state administrative data) to calculate rates on indicators.

Next, we employed GIS analyses to map the indicators of healthy aging representing the conceptual domains. Mapped indicators are reported at actionable geographic units to highlight successes/failures across the state.



A flash mob of healthy older adults

Conclusion/Next Steps

Concurrently we conducted an environmental scan of healthy aging programs, including programs focused on health and wellness, purposeful engagement and elder empowerment, to provide a snapshot of available resources and gaps.

Results of the environmental scan and indicator report are being disseminated to providers in the aging, public health and human services networks, researchers, advocates, government, legislators, older adults, and anyone interested in supporting healthy aging.

This community-engaged research and dissemination approach provides a model for other states to optimize healthy aging.